



**For immediate release
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DCR TO CLOSE STORROW DRIVE TUNNEL AT NIGHT TO FACILITATE TUNNEL REPAIRS

Week of overnight closures will test feasibility of nightly shut-downs to hasten completion

The Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) plans to close both lanes of the Storrow Drive Tunnel from 11 p.m. to 5 a.m. each night from Saturday night, Sept. 13, through Monday morning, Sept. 22, to facilitate repairs inside the tunnel.

This week of night-time closures was planned from the beginning of the interim repairs project, but it will also serve as an experiment to see whether it would be feasible to use full night-time closure for the duration of the remaining repairs to hasten the end of the work. Engineers from DCR and SPS New England Inc., the agency's contractor, estimate that closing the tunnel each night until repairs are complete could result in the work being finished at least three months earlier than originally planned. Without a full, night closure, repairs are expected to be completed next summer, 2009. With the full night closure, the work could be completed in spring.

"The contractor has told us we can shave several months off this project if we close the tunnel completely every night for construction," said DCR Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr. "Next week's night-time closures will help us determine whether that would be desirable. We plan to evaluate the traffic impacts, and ask the public to give their input, before we make a decision."

Sullivan said DCR invites and strongly encourages neighborhood residents and commuters to comment on the plan by e-mail to: dcr.updates@state.ma.us. In addition, DCR officials have scheduled a public meeting for 6 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 25, in the Boston Public Library mezzanine, to discuss the idea of a full, night closure for the duration of the repairs.

During next week's closure, SPS will relocate the lighting system inside the tunnel, clean several steel beams, and begin demolishing a damaged tile wall. These activities require extensive staging inside the tunnel, necessitating the closure of both travel lanes. They are part of the \$11.5 million in interim repairs being made to the tunnel.

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Vehicles approaching the tunnel, which carries eastbound (inbound) traffic only, will be detoured across the Western Avenue and River Street bridges to Memorial Drive in Cambridge. Westbound (outbound) traffic will not be affected. Emergency vehicles will be allowed to travel through the tunnel during the hours it is closed, and accommodations will be made for traffic related to large sporting or cultural events in Boston.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, and dams, in addition to 278 bridges and miles of roadways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.